



Ricky Davis

The weather this summer was termed “average” by many observers across the Region. This was especially true in many coastal areas, but there were still several inland locations dealing with dry conditions from the localized long-standing drought. The only major storm system was Tropical Storm *Alberto*, which produced heavy rain in many central and eastern parts of the Region 12-14 June. Generally, the nesting season went well for most birds, although some observers mentioned late nesting by certain species.

Abbreviations: C. Hatt. (Cape Hatteras, Dare, NC); E.L.H. (E. L. Huie Land Application Facility, Clayton, GA); H.B.S.P. (Huntington Beach S.P., Georgetown, SC); Hoop. (Hooper Lane, Henderson, NC); Kennesaw Mt. (Kennesaw Mt. National Battlefield Park, Cobb, GA); Pea I. (Pea Island N.W.R., Dare, NC); S.S.S. (Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper, SC).

WATERFOWL THROUGH STORK

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck numbers increased at the Altamaha W.M.A., GA with a peak of 43 noted 1 Jul (PS). Many were paired, and copulation was observed, so breeding in the area was certainly likely. Lingering waterfowl included a summering Red-head at Currituck, NC 18 Jul (SJ), a female Ring-necked Duck at Bass L., Watauga, NC 22 Jun (JL), a male Greater Scaup on Jekyll I., GA 1-10 Jun (LT, JF, EH), all three scoters (2 Surf, a White-winged, and 12 Black) at Ft. Fisher, NC 11 Jun (RD), and a Red-breasted Merganser at Folly I., SC 7 Jul (JG). A few nonbreeding Common Loons are found in the Region each summer, and this year singles were noted at Clarks Hill Res. Dam, SC 11 Jul (PC) and at H.B.S.P. 8 Jul (JP et al.). Locally rare nesting by Pied-billed Grebes occurred at

the E.L.H., with two pairs with young in late Jun (CL), and at Arrowhead, Floyd, GA, where present from the spring season until at least 22 Jun, when 3 imm. were noted (MD).

Pelagic trips off North Carolina's Outer Banks produced several *Pterodroma* highlights: a Fea's Petrel off Hatteras 2 Jun and a Bermuda Petrel off Hatteras 4 Jun (BPI). Thankfully, there was not a major die-off of Greater Shearwaters again this summer; the only one noted was on the beach at Jekyll I., GA in early Jul (*vide* JFI). Summer Manx Shearwaters, always of interest in our Region, were seen off Hatteras, NC on four trips from early Jun–mid-Jul (BPI). North Carolina waters hosted the 2nd Black-bellied Storm-Petrel in the w. North Atlantic off Hatteras 16 Jul (K. Sutherland et al., ph. Brian Patteson, ph. Scott Jenex, BPI). Elsewhere, a Band-rumped Storm-Petrel was a good find about 184 km e. of Ossabaw I., GA 16 Jun (ND).

White-tailed Tropicbird reports involved one out of Charleston, SC 16 Jun (ND) and 2-



This Black-bellied Storm-Petrel spotted by Kate Sutherland off Hatteras, North Carolina 16 July 2006 represents only the second record of the species for the western North Atlantic Ocean (the first was photographed off Hatteras in May 2004). Photograph by Scott Jenex.

3 off Hatteras, NC 1 Jul (BPI). Unidentified tropicbirds included one off Hatteras 10 Jun (BPI) and 3 about 96 km s. of Beaufort Inlet, NC 21 Jun (JFe). A Brown Booby was on the beach at Bald Head I., NC 16 Jun (MDe). The bird, apparently sick, was quite possibly the same individual present on that island during May. The White Oak Cr., Chatham, NC Anhingas, first noted in May, were present all summer and attempted to nest, but the attempt apparently failed (ML). Magnificent Frigatebird reports in South Carolina included one at Edisto Beach 4 Jun (CW) and one at Bird I., Cape Romain N.W.R. 30 Jun (*vide* ND). In North Carolina, singles were at Oregon Inlet 1 Jun (ND), at Sneads Ferry 30 Jun (GG), at Wrightsville Beach in early Jul (WG), near Salvo the first week of Jul (GGi, RL), and near Roanoke I. 15 Jul (SJ).

Very unusual for summer was the American Bittern at the Altamaha W.M.A., GA 7 Jun

(GK); this area also produced an excellent count of 15 Least Bitterns 10 Jun (JFI), notable for a relatively hard-to-spot species. The nesting Great Blue Herons near Brevard, NC first noted in May fledged young by mid-Jun (IJ). Always noteworthy in our Region, a Great White Heron was at the Edenton, NC waterfront Jul+ (BB et al.). Individuals of this subspecies of Great Blue Heron often remain in our area for extended periods, and apparently this bird has been present for a year or so. Reddish Egrets are annual summer visitors to our area, and this season's most interesting reports involved 3 at Jekyll I., GA 3 Jul (KB) and one in the sound near Hatteras, NC 27 Jul (BP). Noteworthy inland night-heron reports included an imm. Black-crowned at Berry College, Rome, GA 9 Jul (MD), an imm. Yellow-crowned at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC 15 Jul (RS), and up to 13 (2 ad., 11 juv.) Yellow-crowns at New Hope Creek Impoundment, Chapel Hill, NC 19-30 Jul (TN, MJ, m.ob.). Roseate Spoonbills were

noted away from the usual s coastal Georgia area more than usual this summer. Very rare inland sightings involved one at Warner Robins, Houston, GA 26 Jun (BS) and one along the Congaree R. in Richland, SC 30 Jul+ (MT). Less unusual coastal reports included up to 6 in the Bulls I., SC area most of Jul (ND) and 2 in the Sunset Beach, NC area 7 Jul (SH), with one remaining the rest of the month (m.ob.). Wood Storks continued to do well at the usual locations this summer. Of particular note, the size of the nesting colony in s. Columbus, NC first noted last

year, increased to over 100 birds this summer (*vide* HL).

RAPTORS THROUGH TERNS

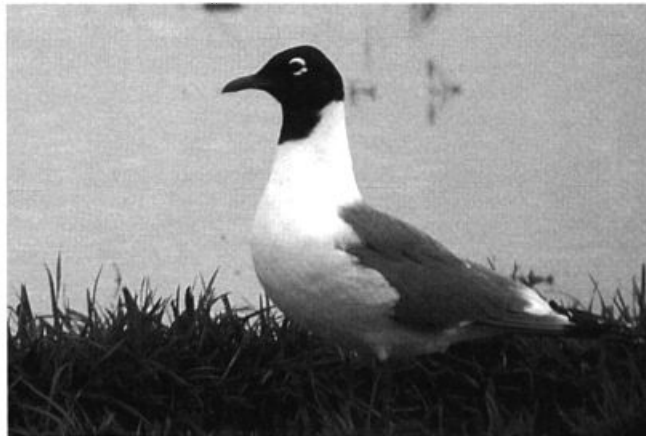
Swallow-tailed Kites were once again present along the Cape Fear R., NC in the Bladen–Columbus border area this summer. Six were noted 11 Jun (RD), and at least 2 were still present 29 Jul (MM et al.). These birds were paired up, but again, no nesting evidence was noted; nests of this species are notoriously difficult to locate. A Northern Harrier near Columbia, SC 3 Jun (MT) was an extremely late bird for that state, especially at an inland locality. Noteworthy summer Sharp-shinned Hawk reports included singles at Chapel Hill, NC in Jun and in Durham, NC 11 Jul (WC), one near Winston-Salem, NC 1 Jul (JPi, JD), one carrying food at Roan Mt., NC 28 Jun (RK), and 3 in Bartow, GA 22 Jul (JS, BL). Cooper's Hawks are much more

prevalent in summer, and this year there were numerous sightings spread across the Region. Extremely rare for the mts. was the presence of 2 American Kestrels near Clayton, Rabun, GA 24 Jun (JS et al.). This species is almost never found in that area of the state during the summer.

Interesting rail reports came from Georgia this season. A Sora seen at the Altamaha W.M.A. 10 Jun (B&DZ) was unusual in that the species is not known to nest in the state. A Virginia Rail with a chick was seen on Skidaway I. 24 Jul (CM), providing one of only a few confirmed breeding reports for the coast of that state. American Coots summered at several sites throughout the Region again, with the best counts involving the 12 at the Altamaha W.M.A., GA 10 Jun (JFI, EH) and at least 11 on the Salt Pond at C. Hatt. all summer (P&NM, RD). Limpkins made news in Georgia this summer, with 2 at Reed Bingham S.P. (DV et al., *vide* TM), one at the Altamaha W.M.A. 23 Jun (SD et al.), one at Blalock Res., Henry 6-11 Jul (CL et al.), and up to 4 at the Chickasawhatchee W.M.A., Dougherty 2 Jul+ (WS, TL).

North Carolina's 2nd Snowy Plover, first found at C. Hatt. in late May, was last noted 3 Jun (JF et al.). An American Avocet at H.B.S.P. 8 Jul (JP et al.) was unusual for that locality that early in the season. Upland Sandpipers started their fall migration a little early, with 2 being at the Orangeburg, SC sod farm 7 Jul (ND). The best count later in the month was the 24 at the Marshallville, Macon, GA sod farm 30 Jul (EB, MB). Two Long-billed Curlews were good finds at H.B.S.P. 30 Jul (RLi, *vide* JP). Three White-rumped Sandpipers were rather late at the E.L.H. 13 Jun (EB). Not only late but very rare outside of the fall season was the Baird's Sandpiper at the American Protein Plant ponds, Hall, GA 3-5 Jun (JC et al., GS et al., DM). A Wilson's Snipe at the rice fields near Roper, NC 29 Jul (JL) was somewhat early as a returning fall migrant. Summer sightings of American Woodcock are hard to come by; thus of note was one flushed near Charlotte, NC 20 Jul (AK). Only one Wilson's Phalarope was mentioned this summer, that being at Pea I. 18 Jul (SJ).

South Polar Skuas have been hard to find recently; the only ones reported were singles



This alternate-plumaged Franklin's Gull was photographed at Hooper Lane, Henderson County, North Carolina 26 June 2006. First found by John Lindfors, it provided the first June record for that state and only the second for the mountains of the Southern Atlantic Region. Photograph by Wayne Forsythe.

104 km ssw. of Beaufort Inlet, NC 1 Jun (JFe) and off Hatteras, NC 4 Jun (BPI). Jaeger numbers have been down too; a Pomarine was off Charleston, SC 16 Jun (ND), and single Long-taileds were off Hatteras 2 & 4 Jun (BPI).

A Franklin's Gull was a surprise at Hoop. 26 Jun (JLi, WF). This bird provided the first Jun sighting for that state and only the 2nd for the mountains. Lesser Black-backed Gulls once again summered at several sites this



This Common Ground-Dove was present at a site in the Mills River Valley, Henderson County, North Carolina 25 June (here) through 9 July 2006, only the fourth reported for the North Carolina mountains and first since 1984. Photograph by Wayne Forsythe.

year. The best count was of 19 on the beach at Frisco, NC 29 Jul (SB). Sooty Tern reports this summer included 11 out of Charleston, SC 16 Jun (ND), 5 off Hatteras, NC 1 Jul (BPI), and one out of Murrell's Inlet, SC 21 Jul (JP). The peak Bridled Tern numbers included 27 out of Charleston, SC 16 Jun (ND) and 16 off Hatteras, NC 1 Jul (BPI). Inland tern numbers of note included 23 Blacks over the pond on Taff Rd., Bartow, GA 28 Jul (KB) and 20 Commons and 4 Forster's at L. Walter F. George, GA 16 Jul (WCh). Also 2 Black Terns in

Bryan, GA 14 Jun (GK) were considered very unusual for the Georgia coast in that month.

DOVES THROUGH CROSSBILLS

Rare and locally unusual Common Ground-Doves were reported twice this summer. One in the Mills R. valley in Henderson, NC 25 Jun (MW, WF) provided only about the 3rd sighting for the mts. of that state. One was also a surprise at the E.L.H. 22 Jul (PB et al.), providing a very rare Atlanta area report. A migrant Black-billed Cuckoo was in the Bodie I., NC area 10 Jun (CD). Willow Flycatchers have been known to be very late spring migrants along the coast; thus of note was one singing at North R. Farms, Carteret, NC 18 Jun-9 Jul (JF et al.), a most unusual summer report. It should be noted that summering birds were found in coastal Virginia (at Wallops I.) for the first time in 2006, so nesting in the outer Coastal Plain of North Carolina is conceivable. The nearest confirmed coastal nesters are in Delaware, in marshside habitats. Eastern Phoebe are normally absent from the outer Coastal Plain during summer. This year, one was very unusual on Hilton Head I., SC 6 Jun (JCo), and another was a surprise near Havelock, Craven, NC 27 Jul (JF). Scissor-tailed Flycatchers made news in North Carolina this summer with two breeding attempts, unprecedented in that state. The male previously reported at Southern Pines, NC during the spring remained and was joined by a female by 7 Jun (MJ). Over the course of the summer, these birds attempted to nest three times, with the last time being successful: young were observed 30 Jul (CB). Also, the pair returned to the site s. of Monroe, Union 18 Jun-30 Jul+ (A&BO) and attempted to nest, although success of the nesting was not noted. Finally, the birds were present at the site near McDonough, GA for much of the early summer (m.ob.). Other Scissor-taileds were observed along I-75 n. of Macon GA 5 Jun (*vide* TM) and s. of the Atlanta airport along I-285 on 24 Jul (*vide* DF).

Noteworthy summer Warbling Vireo reports involved one at Fletcher Park, Fletcher, NC 24 Jun (WF, RS), one ad. feeding young at Beaver L., Asheville, NC 1 Jul (ST), and one along Ivy Log Gap Rd., Rabun, GA 8 Jun (JC)

for a very rare and unusual report. The species is not known to nest in that state. North Carolina got its 7th **Black-whiskered Vireo** when one was photographed at Manteo, NC 29 Jun (JL). The bird was present for a very brief time and was obviously on the move. Why has that state gotten substantially more Black-whiskered records than neighboring states? And of what subspecies are these birds? Common Raven sightings continued in the cen. North Carolina region again, with one at Umstead Park, Raleigh 11 Jun (BM) and one at Southern Pines 19 Jul (WI). A Swainson's Thrush was very late at Miller Park, Winston-Salem, NC 8 Jun (AR et al.). An **American Pipit** seen at close range on the Dortches B.B.S. route in extreme e. Nash, NC 22 Jun (MJs) was almost without precedent: there are perhaps two previous Regional reports of this species for Jun.

Sixteen male Blue-winged Warblers on territory in Murray, GA late May–Jun (JSp) was a very impressive total for this uncommon, localized species at the edge of its breeding range. Three territorial Magnolia Warblers on Roan Mt., NC (RK) during the summer was a good number for this very localized summer warbler. This summer's Yellow-rumped Warbler reports came from the usual North Carolina locations, with a male at Grandfather Mt. 20 Jun (JL) and up to 2 at Roan Mt. 25–28 Jun (RB et al.; RK). Several late warblers included a Blackpoll at Riverbend Park, Cataw-

ba, NC 3 Jun (DMa) and an American Redstart on Jekyll I., GA 2 Jun (LT). Several locally rare summer warblers for Congaree N.P., Richland, SC were a singing Worm-eating and 2 singing Ovenbirds 10 Jun (RC). This was a first Jun record for the Park for Ovenbird and one of only a handful of records for Worm-eating. A Swainson's Warbler on territory near Charlotte, Mecklenburg, NC 20 Jul (AK) provided the 3rd breeding season report for this species in that county.

Locally rare were the 4 singing male Indigo Buntings in spruce–fir openings on Roan Mt., NC 19 Jul (RK). This species is unusual at that elevation. Painted Buntings also pushed their range somewhat inland and to the n. in North Carolina: 3 were found on the Merriam B.B.S., Carteret 11 Jun (JF). Dickcissel reports were down somewhat from last year, with the best counts being up to 17 at North R. Farms, Carteret, NC 11 Jun (JF et al.), 9 at two sites in Gordon, GA 24 Jun (JFI), 5 in the Tall–Brandon Farm Rd. area of Bartow, GA 23 Jul (KB), and 3–4 near Pettigrew S.P., NC 21 Jun–1 Jul (HL, JPi, WC; RD). Of note at the Carteret, NC site, a nest was discovered 25 Jun (JFe), with several juvs. being seen by the end of the period. This summer's Red Crossbill reports involved 2 in Blowing Rock, NC 21–23 Jun (JL), 5 on Roan Mt., NC 28 Jun (RK), and 30 (3 females, 27 juvs.) along the road to the top of Mt. Mitchell, NC 7 Jul (MW). Obviously, there was excellent breed-

ing success in the area this summer.

Contributors: Scott Baron, Betsy Bennett, Eric Boehm, Michael Boehm, Rob Biller, Ken Blankenship, Carol Bowman, Patrick Brisse Robin Carter, Jack Carusos, Walt Chambers (WCh), Paul Champlin, Jack Colcolough (JCo), Will Cook, Ricky Davis, Steve Davis, Maureen Dewire (MDe), Nathan Dias, Marion Dobbs, John Dole, Curtis Dykstra, Jack Fennell (JFe), Jim Flynn (JFI), Wayne Forsythe, Dot Freeman, John Fussell, Ginny Gillam (GGi), Jason Giovannone, Walker Golder, Gilbert Grant, Steve Holzman, Earl Horn, Wayne Irvin, Scott Jennex, Mark Johns (MJs), Mike Johnson, Tom Joyce, Gene Keferl, Alan Kneidel, Rick Knight, Carol Lambert, Todd Lanier, Russ Lay, Harry LeGrand, Jr., Jeff Lewis, John Lindfors (JLi), Ritch Lilly (RLi), Bill Lotz, Merrill Lynch, Dwayne Martin (DMa), Carol McClelland, Michael McCloy, Darlene Moore, Pat & Neal Moore (P&NM), Terry Moore, Brian Murphy, Toby Nathan, Anne & Blayne Olsen (A&BO), Brian Patte-son, Inc. (BPI), Jack Peachey, Jeff Phippen (JPi), Ann Robertson, Bob Sargent, Wayne Schaffner, Georgann Schmalz, Ron Selvey, Jeff Sewell, Paul Sykes, Lydia Thompson, Simon Thompson, Mike Turner, Dan Vickers, Craig Watson, Marilyn Westphal, Bob & Deb Zarembo (B&DZ). 🐦

Ricky Davis, 608 Smallwood Drive, Rocky Mount, North Carolina 27804, (RJDNC@aol.com)

Florida



Bill Pranty

Summer 2006 was fairly typical weather-wise. Aside from some pelagic species—and potentially the Southern Lapwing—it was a quiet season for rarities. Tropical Storm Alberto hit the Gulf coast at the Big Bend region on 13 June, causing minimal damage. Predictably, several species of pelagic terns were found in the storm's wake. David J. Powell, who has authored the summer report for Florida since 2000, recently earned his doctorate and has moved to Arizona. We wish Dave well, and thank him for his past efforts.

Abbreviations/definitions: F.O.S.R.C. (Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee); N.S.R.A. (North Shore Recreation Area, Orange); report (any observation); record (only reports verifiable from photograph, audio/videotape, or specimen evidence).

WATERFOWL THROUGH SPOONBILL

Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks continue their colonization of n. Florida, with 18 at St Marks N.W.R., Wakulla 3 Jun (TC) and 12 at Springhill Road W.T.P., Tallahassee, Leon 12 Jun (GM). Two Black-bellied broods in a phosphate mine 10 Jul (PF) furnished the first Hillsborough breeding report. Two Fulvous Whistling-Ducks were n. to Paynes Prairie Preserve S.P., Alachua 6–11 Jun (MMA et al.), while a pair with 4 young in a phosphate mine 11 Jul (PT, CG) furnished the first